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JUNE 2, 2016

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Man arrested and released after 55-year-old is found dead



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A policeman on duty outside the house in Banbury where a 55-year-old man was found dead, sparking a murder investigation

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A NEIGHBOUR has paid tribute to a "friendly man" whose sudden death sparked a police investigation in Banbury.

The 55-year-old, named locally as "Mark", was found dead at a house in Causeway on Thursday morning last week after police were called to reports a man had been injured.

A 63-year-old man from Banbury was arrested on suspicion of murder the same day but released without charge on Friday.

Christopher Bishop moved into his house in St Leonard's Close, opposite the dead man, five months ago, and said he got on well with him. He knew the man as 'Mark'.

He said: "When I moved in he came round and introduced himself.

"He was often stood outside having a drink and he was such a nice, friendly man. He kept himself to himself. He often went out early in the morning and came back at about 10am."

Mr Bishop said Mark, who did not work because of a back injury, was living alone after divorcing his wife.

He added: "He had a couple of friends

Kieran Davey
kdavey@nqo.com

who used to come out and see him.

"I could not believe it when I heard about him. It was just such a shock.

"He would talk to anybody, he was always having a conversation with someone."

Residents in the Causeway woke on Thursday to find police outside their homes after the discovery was made at about 8am.

Forensic teams were seen carrying out investigations as officers attempted to gather clues as to what had happened.

Officers remained in the road all day to reassure residents, who had been left shocked by what happened, while the house had blue tarpaulin over the front door.

Ali Karin, who works at Banbury Station Taxis in adjacent Merton Street, said: "It is very shocking to hear."

Detective Inspector Steve Raffield from Banbury Police Station said: "As a result of the post-mortem examina-

tion we are no longer treating the man's death as suspicious.

"However, the force will continue to investigate the circumstances on behalf of the coroner. I would like to thank the community for their understanding while officers have been in the area conducting inquiries."

"Our thoughts remain with the family of the man who has died at this extremely difficult time."

The victim's next of kin have been informed, but a date for the inquest has not yet been sent.

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Recycling bank rubbish fly-tipped next to canal

Culprit took electrical items and clothes from bins and dumped them in a field

A FLY-TIPPER stole clothes and electrical items from a recycling bank and dumped them in a field.

Cherwell District Council said the culprit left 30 bags of rubbish in a field next to the Oxford Canal.

A spokeswoman said the waste needed five council staff and a member of the Canal and River Trust with a boat to get to the site, on the edge of Banbury.

About 880kg of rubbish was found.

Councillor Debbie Pickford, Cherwell's lead member for clean and green, said: "Fly-tips are a drain on the public purse, pulling hard-working staff away from other duties.

"Rather than letting the taxpayer foot the bill, we want to charge the person responsible.

"I urge anyone with information that will help us identify him or her to get in touch.

"What was especially frustrating was the fact that the culprit appears to have removed a large volume of clothes and electrical items from the recycling banks.

"This means that materials which local residents have rightly tried to recycle were removed from the appropriate containers



Thirty bags of items stolen from a recycling bank were fly-tipped by the Oxford Canal in Banbury

Kieran Davey
kdavey@nqo.com

and dumped in a field.

"This is to the detriment of the environment, the local community and the council."

The clean-up team spent two-and-a-half hours cleaning the scene.

As well as clothes and electrical goods they found 12 used medical

syringes, food waste and camping equipment. Fly-tipping is a criminal offence punishable by a fine of up to £50,000 or 12 months in jail if convicted in a magistrates' court.

A new law came in on May 9 which meant local authorities can also issue £400 on-the-spot fines to anyone caught in the act of illegally dumping rubbish.

The offence can attract an un-

limited fine and up to five years imprisonment if convicted in a crown court.

The waste was dumped near Hardwick Lock Field Bridge, between the northern end of Grimsbury reservoir and the M40.

Anyone with information about the flytip should contact Cherwell District Council on 01295 227007.

Calls will be treated in confidence.

Security at council HQ 'tightened'

TIGHTER security measures at a council HQ are making life more difficult for everyone, staff have said.

Oxfordshire County Council has tightened security at County Hall in Oxford following a series of protests both outside and inside the building against council cuts.

Where before members of the public could walk the corridors freely to attend public council meetings and inquest hearings, now doors are locked and visitors can only get inside with a council chaperone.

One employee, who asked not to be named, said security had been tightened after a recent protest against county council cuts to children's centres where several protesting mothers went inside county hall and set up their own mock children's centre as part of their action.

The officer said: "It comes across as not a big deal but it's massively affected us.

"Even some staff need to be escorted in now.

"County Hall is supposed to be open to the public but if the doors are locked it's hardly public."

The county council denied the new measures had been prompted by the children's centre protests.

Spokesman Owen Morton said: "We are currently trialling some new arrangements to help manage access to parts of County Hall including the Coroner's Court, and to improve security for both staff and visitors.

"This is part of wider internal maintenance work at County Hall and has not been prompted by any specific incident – recent or otherwise.

"We will review arrangements in due course."

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Grant cash boost for work on park facelift



Members of the Wild Banbury project hard at work, from left, Neil Clennell, Colin Clarke, Chris Heath, Anthony Foxlee-Brown, Andrew Short, Suzi Wild, Mike Hall and Judith Hartley

Kieran Davey
kdavey@nqo.com

SCYTHING, pond-digging and wildflower planting will be taught in a Banbury park this summer after a conservation project received a £93,300 grant to continue.

The Wild Banbury project was launched last year to give a makeover to Spiceball Park and the River Cherwell which runs alongside.

Now, thanks to new funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, community groups and local people are being invited to come down to the park this summer and learn new conservation skills.

The project is being run by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wild-

life Trust (BBOWT).

The trust's director of conservation and education for Oxfordshire, Neil Clennell, said: "Spiceball Park is a well-used amenity but until we started work last autumn the river was almost hidden from people walking and cycling.

"Improving the wildlife habitats through Spiceball Park is increasing the river's biodiversity, and many more people are watching wildlife from the riverside walk."

The second phase of the project will include people learning skills such as scything, as well as creating new habitats for wildlife by digging out ponds, clearing scrub and planting wild flowers.

The project has also been funded by £64,000 from Banbury Town Council, £4,000

from Cherwell District Council and £27,295 from waste management firm Grundon.

The first phase of Wild Banbury, funded through a £31,000 grant by the Environment Agency, started at the end of last year.

Work included "electro-fishing" on the river, clearing away vegetation and trees overshadowing the river, and creating and planting up shallow river banks.

Over the past 18 months volunteers have been re-landscaping the River Cherwell.

This has involved putting in new banks planted with native wild flowers, bridges and benches so more people can walk by the river.

Colin Clarke, Banbury town councillor for Calthorpe South ward, said: "The

town council is delighted with the progress so far in Spiceball Park with the opening up of the banks of the River Cherwell. We look forward to continuing this exciting project and greatly appreciate all the hard work and effort by all concerned."

Banbury Museum will also be providing historical stories about the site as part of the project, and are holding activity days and reminiscence walks allowing people to find out more about wildlife. Education manager Suzi Wild said: "This is a wonderful opportunity to delve deeper into the inspiring stories of Banbury."

Speaking about the funding, BBOWT project manager Judith Hartley added: "It is great to see so many partners coming forward to support this initiative."

Councils accused over studies

LOCAL authorities in Oxfordshire have accused each other of wasting thousands of pounds after two almost identical studies on how to save public money were commissioned.

International firm Grant Thornton has been appointed to conduct a review by Oxfordshire County Council, just weeks after the county's five district councils, including Oxford City Council, tasked PwC to do the same thing. Both will cost the taxpayer about £100,000 each.

The aim of both is to examine how the authorities can be shaken up to operate more efficiently.

County council leader Ian Hudspeth said: "Local government needs to change in Oxfordshire and it is vital we make the right decision to protect council services for the future."

"Council tax payers will want to know the facts so they can make up their own minds, and that is what this independent review will provide."

The county council refused to participate in the districts' study, claiming it would be biased towards the creation of four new 'unitary' authorities.

Earlier this year Prime Minister David Cameron and other Oxfordshire MPs

spoke out in support of this proposal and it is the preferred option of the districts.

Talks had initially taken place over running a combined study but the county council's demands, which included appointing an independent chairman, were rejected on the basis it would have added too many layers of bureaucracy.

Vale of White Horse District Council leader Matthew Barber said last week the county council's decision was "a pity", adding that it would have "saved taxpayers' money" if it joined the other authorities.

New bus service to the home of Shakespeare

A NEW bus service is being introduced to help passengers travel between Banbury and Stratford-upon-Avon.

Johnsons Excelbus will be starting the X70 service to run on weekdays, leaving Banbury at 7.35am then leaving Stratford at 4.15pm.

The company operates the 269 and 270 services, which will be running a revised schedule from Monday, June 6. The service will operate

from Monday to Saturday from Stratford-upon-Avon to Banbury via Kineton and Tysoe, with six journeys a day.

The company will be taking over the Warwickshire County Council-contracted 50A service from Stagecoach. Also running between Stratford and Banbury, there will be three return journeys a day from Stratford and two departing from Shipston to Banbury.

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Boundary plan scrapped as it's 'too complex'

A BID to rip up historic boundaries and merge councils in Oxfordshire with ones in Gloucestershire and Northamptonshire has been scrapped.

It emerged yesterday that South Northamptonshire and Cotswold District Council have both pulled out after concerns it would be too costly and complicated.

It would have seen the Cotswolds and West Oxfordshire merged under one authority, with the South Northamptonshire and Cherwell districts also linking up.

The idea was put forward in February by Oxfordshire's five district councils, who proposed four new "unitary" authorities as part of efforts to strike a £1bn devolution deal with the government.

This would also have seen Oxfordshire County Council abolished.

But consultants hired to see if it could work warned including the Cotswolds and South Northamptonshire would make it lengthy and expensive.

It is understood changing county boundaries would have affected police force jurisdictions - requiring legislation to be passed by Parliament - and NHS bosses also feared it would delay plans to bring together health and social care in Oxfordshire.

James Mills, leader of West Oxfordshire District Council, said: "The early findings of our advisors are that it would be too complicated at this stage to go for a cross-boundary option. We will now focus on getting the best solution for our residents."

Mr Mills added: "It is important to say this does not impact on our existing shared working with Cotswold District Council."



Fruit and vegetable seller Richard White receiving his award from councillor Chris Heath, chairman of Cherwell District Council

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Market man gets special award for years of service

Long serving trader's quarter of a century behind fruit and veg stall is rewarded

Kieran Davey

kdavey@nqo.com

ONE of Banbury's best-loved market traders has been honoured for more than 25 years' service in a special event at the town's market.

Fruit and vegetable seller Richard White was given an award for being one of the "Longest Standing Traders" after more than two decades selling his produce each week outside the Castle Quay shopping centre.

After starting work on the market at a young age, Mr White, 54, now works alongside his son Ryan, 28, and the pair also employ staff drawn from the local community.

Mr White, who drives in to Banbury twice a week from his home in Luton, said: "I really wasn't expecting it, but it's nice to be recognised in this way."

"It's a really nice market and you get to know the customers and the other traders."

The market trading is still very much a family tradition, with Richard's father and grandfather both having their turn on the stall.

After his 25 years of work he is still a popular figure at the market on both Thursdays and Saturdays.

And as one might expect, in the years Richard has been trading he has seen a number of changes in the way he sells his produce.

He said: "The market isn't what it used to be, many more people use supermarkets now because it is more convenient."

"They might only beat us on a couple of prices but for some people it's the quality they want from us."

"Often we only survive when the weather is good, if it is sunny you'll have people come out but not if it's raining."

"We still have a loyal follow-

ing though and people still want fresh food at a good quality."

As well as Banbury the Whites have also visited other markets in the south of England, including in Luton and Bedford.

The award was presented by new Cherwell District Council chairwoman Chris Heath, as part of the Banbury edition of Love Your Market 2016.

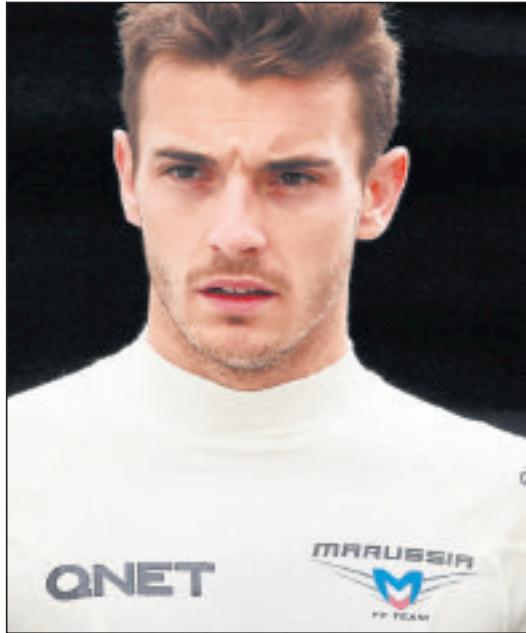
This is a national campaign offering free pitches and insurance to people who want to set up their own market stall, and encourages shoppers to buy produce from local independent traders.

Ms Heath said: "Over the years Richard has built up a warm rapport with the townspeople and it was a real pleasure to be able to recognise his decades of hard work with this award."

"Banbury market is not just a retail outlet, but a community asset which brings us all together at the heart of the town."

"Nobody embodies these values better than Richard."

'We want justice for our son'



Jules Bianchi during practice for the 2014 Monaco Grand Prix

Race driver's family are set to take legal action over 'avoidable' death

Kieran Davey
kdavey@nqo.com

THE family of late Formula 1 driver Jules Bianchi have announced they are taking legal action over his death.

The Frenchman, 25, died in July from fatal head injuries after his car crashed into a recovery vehicle at the Japanese Grand Prix in October 2014.

Law firm Stewarts Law, which represents the family, said last Thursday it had sent a letter to Bianchi's former team, Banbury-based Marussia team – now known as Manor F1 – about the accident.

It said the letter invited the team to accept errors were made in the planning, timing, organisation and conduct of the race.

Stewarts Law partner Julian Chamberlayne said the driver's death was "avoidable".

He added: "The Bianchi fam-

GREEN MEP CALLS ON UN TO CUT PLANE EMISSIONS

A GREEN politician who represents Oxfordshire in the European Parliament has called on the United Nations to act to cut emissions from planes.

Keith Taylor, MEP for the south east of England, called on the UN's aviation body the

ily are determined that this legal process should require those involved to provide answers and to take responsibility for any failings.

"This is important if current drivers are to have confidence that safety in the sport will be put first.

"If this had been the case in Suzuka, Jules Bianchi would most likely still be alive and competing in the sport he loved today."

Bianchi's car lost control on the track after aquaplaning during a rain shower, with the weather and poor visibility being named as factors leading to the collision.

Bianchi's father Philippe said: "We seek justice for Jules, and want to establish the truth about the decisions that led to our son's crash at the Japanese Grand Prix in 2014.

"As a family, we have so many unanswered questions and feel that Jules' accident and death could have been avoided if a series of mistakes had not been made."

Similar letters have also been sent to the FIA, the world governing body of Formula One and the Formula One Group which controls the media rights for the sport.

International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) to develop a plan to act decisively on emissions.

It comes ahead of an emissions summit which will be held at the ICAO's headquarters in Montreal, Canada.

Funding available for sporting clubs

SPORTS clubs in Bicester and Banbury are invited to get in touch with professionals to find out about funding available to them.

Cherwell District Council has teamed up with Oxfordshire Sport and Physical Activity (OXSPA) to provide financial help for community sports clubs.

Sessions are being set up to help grow sporting

opportunities with available funding and how to pull in more participants.

Cherwell District Council deputy leader George Reynolds said: "Strong sports clubs are essential to the creation of a healthy and happy community."

"The council's partnership with OXSPA enables us to catalyse our know-how and resources."

The first session will take

place at Garth Cafe, off Launton Road, on Wednesday, June 8, from 6pm to 9pm.

Up next will be the session in Banbury at Spiceball Leisure Centre on Wednesday, June 15, from 6pm to 9pm.

They are free to attend drop in sessions and for more information contact nicholas@oxspa.co.uk or 07825 935900

OPEN DAY EXPANDING

SIBFORD School will expand its annual open day to include a traditional country fair.

Visitors to the event, on June 18, can enjoy stalls, refreshments, a climbing wall and more.

The fair is open to parents of prospective and current pupils and their families, as well as the community.

This year's theme is "Explore!" and the day starts at 9.30am with a performance by music and drama students.

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Historians chart story of wartime bomber crews

Kieran Davey
kdavey@nqo.com

TWO history enthusiasts are looking for Second World War Bomber Command veterans to come forward and share their memories.

Sandra and Pete Jones, from Kidlington, are volunteers for the International Bomber Command Centre, a national charity which is looking to build up a database of former soldiers and find out more about their role during the war.

As part of their project, the married couple want to interview Oxfordshire Bomber Command veterans or the family.

While Mr Jones, 63, is a keen WW2 collector, his wife's interest comes from her late uncle Ronnie Boone, who was a sergeant in the 35th Squadron Pathfinders and died in June 1943 aged just 20.

He was flying over Holland when his plane was shot down, but his tale inspired his niece to get involved in the project.

Mrs Jones, 59, said: "I've always been interested in finding out about flying history and when we heard about the centre we went along to some of their fundraising sessions where we found out more about the project.

"I'm very proud of the work we are doing, it makes me feel quite emotional when you see the names of your family members who were involved. My uncle was so much younger than my children are now.

"My mum used to talk about him and his memories from the war, once when he came home she surprised him by dressing up in his flying gear."

Bomber Command played a key role in the war, with pilots helping to target bombing in Germany and other enemy countries.

Mr and Mrs Jones, who have two children, are currently training to conduct oral history interviews.

If a former veteran gets in touch with the centre, they will be asked if they are happy to be interviewed.

If the answer is yes the couple

will visit them at home, or wherever is convenient, to take a journey back in time.

Mrs Jones, whose family have lived in Kidlington for more than 30 years, added: "It's not just the air crew we want to speak to, there's everyone from ground crew to those who repaired the planes, and clerks as well.

"If there are sons or daughters of people involved who have their own memories then we'd love to hear from them as well."

So far the IBCC, which is building a new visitors centre in Lincoln, has more than 230 oral history recordings.

The IBCC has also built a memorial on which it would like to include all 55,573 names of the Bomber Command who were killed during the war. It will consist of a memorial spire, steel walls containing the names, one of them being Mrs Jones's uncle.

If you are or know someone who was a Bomber Command veteran, call the *Banbury Cake* on 01865 425433 or email kieran.davey@banburycake.co.uk.



Sandra and Pete Jones on a mission to record Bomber Command stories

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Home Manager,
Michelle Little



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Tall Trees Home Manager, Michelle Little, says: "I firmly believe in giving each resident person-centred care so that their life with us has stimulation and purpose. We speak to their families at length and ask about what they used to enjoy, what they did for a living, and a myriad other questions. We then use this knowledge as a trigger point to connect and engage with each person, from singing or gardening together to a hand massage."

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For more information on Tall Trees or to arrange a visit with Michelle Little, Home Manager, please call **0808 223 5401** or visit caringhomes.org/tall-trees.

Iconic Spitfire will make memorable flypast in Flywheel festival spectacular

ONE of the country's most iconic aircrafts has been added to the summer programme for this year's Flywheel festival at Bicester Heritage.

The Supermarine Spitfire IX MH434 will make an appearance and feature among a whole host of historic vehicles and aircrafts displayed at the annual event.

The historic aircraft was involved in combat over France during the Second World War before it was shot down in 1945.

Laura Bonhomme of Old Flying Machine Company – which owns the aircraft – said: "Old Flying Machine Company is very pleased to be supporting this exciting event and, as always, we endeavour to please the spectators with an authentic and inspiring display featuring our Spitfire, piloted on this occasion by Brian Smith."

The event is hosted at the former RAF bomber station in Bicester now taken on by Bicester Heritage and has been transformed into a hub for historic motoring and aviation.

Day tickets to Bicester Flywheel festival are £23 for adults and £7 for children.



An iconic Spitfire performs at last year's Bicester Flywheel festival

Survivor backs new cancer test

'It's a no brainer', says ex teacher after ordeal of bowel cancer scare

Joe Gammie
jgammie@nqo.com

A BOWEL cancer survivor has said it was a "no brainer" for the Government to introduce a new screening test for the deadly disease.

Joy Dansette was diagnosed with the condition in 2013 after receiving a screening kit in the post after turning 60 and told without urgent surgery she would only have three months to live.

The mum-of-two has now added her voice to that of Bowel Cancer UK, which announced if the Government did not approve a new screening test then lives will be lost.

The charity wants the guaiac Faecal Occult Blood Test (gFOBT) screening test to be replaced by the simpler and more accurate Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT).

It is claimed the new test, which is recommended by the UK National Screening Committee (UKNSC), is simpler and more accurate because it can flag up at-risk patients with one sample instead of three.

Mrs Dansette, who is now in remission after having an operation and a course of chemotherapy to remove the cancer, said making the test as simple as it can be will save lives.

She added: "I hear lots of people who refuse to do it because they think it's disgusting, but I say it's like going to the loo and it can save your life."

"I had no symptoms, it would



Former teacher and bowel cancer survivor Joy Dansette

have been too late when I found out if I hadn't done the test.

"If they are saving lives then they are saving all the money that would have been spent on chemotherapy drugs and treatment.

"If it's a simple test and not too expensive then it's a no brainer."

Former teacher Mrs Dansette, from South Newington, told the Banbury Cake she originally ignored the screening kit when it was posted through her letterbox.

But one day, when she was off school with a cold, she did the test and it came back posi-

tive. After doing two more tests which came back negative then positive, she was invited to the Horton General Hospital for a colonoscopy.

After the examination she was told she had a tumour so big she would die within three months without surgery.

Bowel cancer is the second most deadly cancer in the UK, with 16,200 people dying each year. But if caught early through screening it is entirely treatable and Bowel Cancer UK is urging the government to introduce the new FIT test to make earlier diagnosis easier.

Green advice on the EU vote

NATURE should be put at the centre of the debate on Britain's future in the EU, an MEP representing Oxfordshire has said.

Keith Taylor, Green MEP for South East England, said green spaces are better protected due to EU nature laws.

The politician said more than 50 places in the region, including in Oxfordshire, were protected by the laws.

He added that nearly 11,000 sq miles of wildlife sites across the country were looked after by the EU.

It comes ahead of a referendum on June 23 on whether or not Britain should stay in the EU.

Mr Taylor said: "It's incredibly important to protect our wildlife at an international level – the animals and habitats we take for granted locally are often rare in Europe – and the European Union is absolutely the best place to work together with our neighbours to do this."

"To ensure these places stay as nature intended, to protect the wildlife we hold so dear, and to tackle the cross-border challenges of climate change and air pollution, it is vital we vote Remain on June 23."

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Pilot scheme to aid pupils' mental health

PRIMARY school children in Oxfordshire are set to get help from mental health professionals based in their schools.

A pilot scheme will see the trained staff attend three primary schools in Oxfordshire from September, with the potential for the programme to be rolled out across the county.

Experts said a combination of pressures on children and a decreasing taboo around mental illness meant more pupils were being identified as suffering from a younger age.

Windmill Primary School headteacher Lynn Knapp said she had seen evidence of primary-aged children self-harming and that mental health issues were more prominent than ever.

She said: "More parents are working, there are less opportunities to talk to them at home and children are more likely to be in school from 7.30am to 5.30pm. You might see that children are withdrawn – we have had the odd child who has self-harmed, we have children whose behaviour changes; we see it across all age groups."

"We need more access to services quicker; things take so long."

In October 2014, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust started a scheme which led to mental health professionals being placed in secondary schools.

Oxford Health spokesman Chris Kearney said: "These specially-trained mental health professionals provide direct care to young people within a school setting, offering therapy and support and work in consultation with the broader pastoral care teams to ensure young people's emotional needs are met."

"As part of the service we offer to schools, there is also a telephone consultation line open to teachers and other professionals, where they can call and speak with a mental health professional and get advice."

He said the pilot primary school

Training begins for cancer race

RUNNING groups in Oxfordshire are giving women extra training in the run-up to this year's Race for Life for Cancer Research UK in July.

As part of the partnership between England Athletics and Cancer Research UK, a number of six-week beginner running courses have been set up in the county.

There are a range of sessions during the day, at weekends and in evenings at Cutteslowe Park, Oxford University Parks, Carterton and Wallingford.

Kelly Rumble, event manager, said: "There are more than 200 cancers and we won't give up until we find cures for them all."

"This is a powerful reason to commit to take part – and the first step is easy – round up family, friends and colleagues and enter together."

"We know many women want to take part but are worried about completing the 5k or 10k courses."

"Taking part is about uniting against a disease that affects all of us."

"You can walk, run or jog the routes. When the weather picks up it's easy to fit extra steps into your day."

A total of 4,555 women took part in last year's Race for Life in Oxford and raised £271,000.

This year's Race for Life 5K and 10K events will be on July 10. Visit raceforlife.fit

We're all preparing to tuck in to a Big Lunch

Designed to promote togetherness, many street parties will be celebrating The Queen's 90th birthday as a theme



Enjoying a feast at last year's Big Lunch are Ibrahim, Jannet, Sairreen Ahmed, Mohammed and Iqra. Below, Tim Tarby-Donald and Big Lunch visitors

Kieran Davey

kdavey@nqo.com

RESIDENTS across Oxfordshire are looking forward to tucking in at Big Lunch street parties across the county.

Each summer thousands of picnickers pull up a seat to lunch alongside their neighbours as part of the countrywide initiative and this year many are taking on a royal theme to honour of The Queen's 90th birthday.

The Big Lunch initiative is a country-wide event, which hopes to bring communities and neighbours together in typical British fashion for an afternoon of tea, sandwiches and cakes.

In North Oxfordshire, the Banbury Youth Homelessness Project is hosting a big lunch on July 2, at 2 Chandos Close.

The group hopes to create "human warming" around a feast of dishes bought from around the world by all visitors.

It will be the seventh time the town has hosted the event, which last year had 60s and 70s Flower Power as its theme.

Elsewhere in the county, thousands of people are expected to flock to Sheep Street in Bicester for a royal lunch that won't quite



match the one in The Mall.

The annual Bicester Big Lunch is one of the biggest in the UK and promises to be bigger than previous years which has attracted about 5,000 people to the town centre.

Balloons, bunting and benches will line the streets on Sunday, June 12.

There will be a feast of events and performances with the Bicester churches open-air service from 11am, a host of food, local stallholders, charities and community



groups plus a street food market – not forgetting the home-made crown parade.

One of the organising team, Tia Wedgewood, said: "This year's Bicester Big Lunch will have a British theme in honour of The Queen's birthday."

"There will be the usual live music all day across two stages and there will be lots going on in Sheep Street, Pioneer Square and this year it will extend towards Franklins House."

"Along there will be lots of dance

performances and martial arts displays."

There is also a Big Lunch being held in royal fashion for The Queen's 90th birthday in Witney.

At Freeland Village Hall the parish council is hosting a community picnic from 11.30am until 2pm.

Visitors are asked to bring along food to share to enjoy a picnic lunch with friends and neighbours.

The event is following the recent unveiling of the new children's play area in the neighbouring playing fields.

Warning for pet owners to choose right care service

A BANBURY councillor has made a call for pet owners to choose the right carer for their furry friends over the summer.

Tony Ilott, the district council's lead member for public protection, said people must ensure that the care service they use is licensed to give them piece of mind.

He added: "Friends, professional sitters, kennels and catteries are all legitimate options, but not everyone knows which services require a licence and which don't."

"Residents paying professional sitters or boarding services to look after their animals should be aware that those services very likely require

licensing. Licensed kennels and catteries protect against contagious disease and are inspected to ensure the safety and welfare of the animals."

Domestic pet-sitters, such as family friends or neighbours who look after pets on an ad-hoc basis do not require a licence.

But commercial boarding kennels and professional pet-sitters who regularly look after animals in exchange for payment both require a licence to work.

Keeping an unlicensed boarding establishment for cats or dogs is an offence punishable by a fine of up to £500.

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Tall order for youngsters

Top player shows pupils how it's done with an amazing masterclass

Kieran Davey
kdavey@nqo.com

YOUNG basketball players from the Banbury area have been given a masterclass this week by one of the tallest players in NBA history.

At seven foot four inches, Priest Lauderdale dominates any court he walks on to.

But this week the former Denver Nuggets star has been passing on his knowledge to children at Warriner School in Bloxham.

Head coach Richard Moses said: "We are very grateful to Priest for taking the time to come down and visit the kids here at our Warriner session.

"Everyone's had a great time and I think it's something they will remember for a long time."

With the help of coaches, children have been taught some of basketball's essential skills including shooting, dribbling and penalties.

The half-term sessions started on Tuesday, and will run until Friday from 10am to 2pm.

Last week the former NBA star visited an after-school session at the school as part of the newly-formed Banbury Basketball Club, which has been set up in partnership with the North Oxfordshire



Children at Warriner School with Priest Lauderdale, left

School Sport Partnership and Chelwell District Council.

Last month the former centre also helped run lessons at the Oxford

Spires Academy, as part of his role as an ambassador with the Oxford City Hoops.

For more information on Banbury

Basketball Club and how would-be players can get involved with the team, email banburybasketball@gmail.com.

Call for more support for older carers

MORE support is urgently needed for the 'invisible army' of older people working around the clock to care for their loved ones, Age UK Oxfordshire has said.

Figures released by the charity revealed that over the past seven years, the number of carers aged 80 and over has rocketed from 301,000 to 417,000 nationally.

In Oxfordshire, the figure is believed to be between 4,200 and 4,500, with more than half believed to be doing so for more than 35 hours a week.

Penny Thewlis, deputy chief executive at Age UK Oxfordshire, said: "We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the hundreds of thousands of over-80s who are caring, many virtually full-time, saving the country nearly £6 billion a year in the process. More of that money needs spending on supporting them."

"Many admit to being exhausted and worried about how long they can carry on, and the consequences if they become seriously ill themselves."

County council spokesman Paul Smith said: "Oxfordshire County Council along with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group are committed to supporting carers of all ages in Oxfordshire, through our Carers Oxfordshire service and other partners. We support carers with training, befriending and support to have

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Nice Guys make their mark

THE NICE GUYS (15, 116 mins) Comedy/Drama/Action. Russell Crowe, Ryan Gosling, Angourie Rice, Matt Bomer, Kim Basinger, Margaret Qualley, Keith David, Beau Knapp, Lois Smith, Murielle Telio. Director: Shane Black. GOOD things come to those who wait.

Every decade, filmmaker Shane Black unspools a deliciously off-kilter buddy action comedy that plays fast and loose with the conventions of the genre. In 1996, he penned *The Long Kiss Goodnight* starring Geena Davis and Samuel L Jackson, which metamorphosed a picture-perfect suburban mom into a finely honed killing machine.

In 2005, he repeated the feat and also sat in the director's chair for the potty-mouthed murder mystery *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* headlining Robert Downey Jr and Val Kilmer.

Now, Black strikes it lucky for a third time with the unlikely comic pairing of Russell Crowe and Ryan Gosling in *The Nice Guys*, a hare-brained missing person's caper set in sexually liberated 1977 Los Angeles.

The script delivers big, throaty laughs from the cynical opening – “Marriage is buying a house with someone you hate!” – and adroitly juggles physical and verbal humour, inflicting injuries and indignities on his leading men for our sport and entertainment.

Jackson Healy (Crowe) is a hired heavy, who beats up perverts and stalkers with his knuckleduster.

A young woman called Amelia Kuttner (Margaret Qualley) pays him to scare off low-rent private detective Holland March (Gosling), who has been asking for her around town. The first meeting of these two men ends in bloodshed and broken bones, but Jackson and Holland reluctantly agree to work together when Amelia subsequently vanishes without trace.

“Why don’t you invite him in?” asks Holland’s precocious daughter Holly (Angourie Rice) when Jackson turns up at their door. “No animals in the house, sweetheart,” retorts the investigator, bearing the physical scars of their previous encounter.

The breadcrumb trail of evidence leads to Amelia’s fearsome mother, Judith Kuttner (Kim Basinger), who works for the United States Department of Justice and pleads with Jackson and Holland to locate and protect her child.

Unfortunately, a hitman called John Boy (Matt Bomer) is also on the trail of Amelia, and Holland also needs to solve the perplexing mystery of porn actress Misty Mountains (Murielle Telio), who was apparently seen alive two days after she died in a car accident.

The Nice Guys doesn’t quite soar to the dizzy heights of Black’s previous escapades, but he comes close.

The central plot is a morass of crosses, double crosses, bluffs and coincidences that intrigues and bamboozles, untangling itself in the closing frames with aplomb.

WARCRAFT: THE BEGINNING (12A, 123 mins) Action/Fantasy/Adventure/Romance. Travis Fimmel, Paula Patton, Toby Kebbell, Dominic Cooper, Ben Foster, Ben Schnetzer, Daniel Wu, Ruth Negga, Anna Galvin, Burkely Duffield, Clancy Brown. Director: Duncan Jones.

The power of the human imagination is limitless.

I fondly recall happy hours as a child immersed in Dungeons & Dragons role-playing games with my friends: the pressures of homework or bullying at school melted away as we embarked on valiant quests to slay fierce beasts, rescue damsels in distress and cast magical spells to defeat powerful adversaries.

In the digital age, there's no



Ryan Gosling as Holland March and Russell Crowe as Jackson Healy in *The Nice Guys*

need to huddle in a room with pens and paper, throwing numbered die to decide the fates of plucky adventurers.

Complex online role playing games bring together strangers from around the globe in real time to play out protracted battles in vast virtual realms.

The subscription-based Warcraft series is among the most popular, spawning an entire franchise that has now given birth to this muscular, special effects-heavy blockbuster directed by Duncan Jones. Spectacle trumps characterisation and coherent plotting in every digitally altered frame of *Warcraft: The Beginning*.

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Trevor Skidmore feels that it's all about service. 'Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although

that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done. We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service the Oxford, Banbury & Abingdon areas and Trevor is finding that his approach is a major factor



in his success. 'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Trevor a call for a free quotation on 0800 61 21 118 and he'll be happy to help!

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The Gustav Sonata by Rose Tremain is published in hardback by Chatto & Windus, priced £16.99 (ebook £9.99).

ROSE Tremain is a consummate storyteller. At the core of her finely crafted tales are seemingly unremarkable characters whose inner lives throw a subtle light on the way human beings think and feel. In *The Gustav Sonata*, two boys forge a lifelong friendship in post-war Switzerland. Gustav spends his harsh childhood trying to win the love of his emotionally stunted mother. Talented musician Anton is the much-loved only child of a Jewish family. The counterpoint to their evolving relationship is the history of Switzerland's conduct during World War Two. There are few great dramas here, just a moving study of human emotions that's full of compassion for even its most unappealing characters.

Love You Dead by Peter James is published in hardback by Pan

Macmillan, priced £20 (ebook £7.99).

READING Peter James' books is a bit like watching the TV show *Midsomer Murders* – you end up feeling Brighton is a major crime hotspot with a high murder rate. The twelfth book in the British crime novelist's Roy Grace series, *Love You Dead*, sees the Detective Superintendent trying to juggle three cases at once within a period of just over a month – the re-emergence of his old adversary, serial killer Dr Edward Crisp, the return of his missing wife Sandy and a dangerous black widow, Jodie Bentley. Bentley's story dominates here, with the reader following her as she works her way through a number of older rich husbands. With cliffhanger endings to each chapter keeping the reader in suspense and the gripping cat-and-mouse relationship between the cops and criminal, *Love You Dead* is another hit in the author's career.

Zero K by Don DeLillo is published in hardback by Picador, priced £16.99 (ebook £7.36) DON DELILLO's 16th novel arrives after a six-year pause for thought. Billionaire Ross Lockhart's efforts to freeze and prolong the life of his dying wife, as warily observed by son Jeffrey, cover familiar DeLillo ground – death, language, terrorism, NYC – while his dialogue is at turns frustrating and exhilarating. For *Zero K*'s first half, deep in a secret lab, this stilted extemporising, those beloved lists, do nothing but echo around the precise blankness; only when Jeffrey breaks free do his observations find context – the city, its humanity, gives DeLillo life. Like Jeffrey, he is in danger of being lost to the “touchscreen storm” as the world itself is “being lost to the systems”. Crucially, though, he does not fight gnawing obsolescence, his arid humour forever skewering a death-fixated culture, brokering a fragile truce with the setting sun.

Folk group Fotheringay ready to rock art centre

Kieran Davey
kdavey@nqo.com

FOLK singers Fotheringay will be taking to the stage at the Mill Arts Centre later this month as part of their national tour.

The group, formed in 1970 by singer Sandy Denny, will be visiting Banbury on June 27.

The tour follows the release of their new four-disc box set, called *Nothing more, the Collected Fotheringay*, and celebrates the musical achievements of the band's members over the last 40 years.

It will also be a reunion for the band who were only active for one year until 1971, but still includes original members Jerry Donahue, Gerry Conway and Pat Donaldson.

The band drew its name from founder Sandy Denny's 1968 composition *Fotheringay* about Fotheringay Castle.

The song originally appeared on the 1969 album by her former group Fairport Convention, called *What We Did On Her Holidays*, her first album with the group.

The band will also be playing in Southampton, Gateshead and London. Tickets cost £20 in advance, and are available at themillartscentre.co.uk.



Folk band Fotheringay will be playing at the Mill Arts Centre in Banbury next month

Commission focus on health inequalities prior to writing report

HOUSING, public transport, migrant health and poverty were discussed at the final public session of the Oxfordshire Health Inequalities Commission.

The meeting on Monday last week heard from a range of organisations as the commission prepares to draw up its report on health inequalities in the county and which should be priority areas for action.

Sitting at the Town Hall in Oxford, the commission heard from Dr James Porter, who spoke about the work of Luther Street Medical Practice, which looks after homeless people in the centre of the city.

The Connection Floating Support charity, which offers practical and emotional help to people who want to regain control of their lives, highlighted the reduction in the length of time people are supported due to funding changes.

Oxford City Council also outlined its housing strategy at the meeting and cuts to subsidised bus services were addressed by Oxfordshire County Council. Commission chairman Professor Sian Griffiths said: "We are very grateful to everyone who has taken the time to submit evidence over the last few months.

"The information we have collected both in writing and at the public session will inform the recommendations we make in the autumn which could achieve sustainable reductions in health inequalities in the county.

"We are focusing on what can be done to reduce health inequalities at all ages, and how we are going to make sure that we have made a difference, not just produced another report."

The report will be published in the autumn.

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Oxfordshire Listings

Events

THURSDAY

Bring and Buy Coffee Morning:

Kingston Bagpuize & Southmoor Bowls Club, Oxford Road, Kingston Bagpuize. 11am. Free. 01235 868276.

Drop In and Create – Playing with Pattern (all ages):

Cornerstone Arts Centre, 25 Station Road, Didcot. Half term week. 10am. Free. 01235 515144.

East Hagbourne Scarecrow Trail:

New Road, Main Road, Blewbury Road, East Hagbourne. Shakespeare and all that. Maps available for £1 from the East Hagbourne Community Shop and The Fleur de Lys. 10am. 01235 813826.

Sling Walk:

Earth Trust Centre, Little Wittenham. Bring your baby for a ramble. 10am. £4 suggested donation per child. 01865 407792.

Volunteers Week Big Thank You:

Banbury Market Place. Come and talk to Pip and Sheila about volunteering

opportunities in your area. 9am. Free. 0300 3030 126.

FRIDAY

All over the world:

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Park Street, Woodstock. SOFO's special holiday Kids Club. Challenging workshop for 7-10 year olds. Booking essential. 10am. £30. 01993 810 214.

Discover and Play:

Earth Trust Centre, Little Wittenham. Forest School for the under-5s. 10am. £4 suggested donation per child. 01865 407792.

Sobell charity Golf Day:

Didcot Golf Club, The Straight Mile, Horton cum Studley. 11.30am. £270 for a team of 4. 01865 857066.

SATURDAY

4247 Gala Weekend:

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway, Station Approach, Station Road, Chinnor. 9am. Adult £13, Senior £12, child £6. 07979 055366.

Village fete:

Wotton Underwood, Wotton. 2pm. £3 (£2 concessions, under 12s free).

Benson Garden Club Plant Sale:

6 College Farm, High Street, Benson. 9am. Free. 01491 837242.

Bicester and Kidlington Ramblers:

New Street Car Park, New Street, Chipping Norton. Moderate 10-mile circular walk via Salford and the Rollright Stones. Picnic lunch. 10am. 07939 826412.

Bloodwise Blenheim Palace

Triathlon: Blenheim Palace, Woodstock. Triathletes start with a swim in the freshwater lake, followed by a cycle segment and run. <http://www.theblenheimtriathlon.com/>. 9am. From £84.76.

Bothy Vineyard Open Days:

Bothy Vineyard, Frilford Heath. 11am. Free. 01865 390067.

Chadlington Beer Festival:

Chadlington Memorial Hall, Chapel Road, Chadlington. Live music throughout the day and evening, kids' tent, all-day BBQ, tea tent. 12pm. £10, includes beer tokens and glass.

Combe Open Gardens and Cream

Teas: The Reading Room, The Green, Combe. 2pm. £4 for adults, children free. 01993 898348.

Fawth Fest and Church

Celebration: North Leigh village, Park Road, North Leigh. Majestic Birthday Bash at 7.30pm on Saturday and Family Picnic Tea 4.30pm on Sunday. 11am. Free.

Jumble Sale:

Wootton & Dry Sandford Community Centre, Lambourgh Hill, Wootton. 2pm. 50p entry.

Jumble Sale and Cake Sale:

Laurence Hall, Church Road, Cholsey. Jumble 2pm. 20p entry. 01491 651579.

Stratton Audley Food, Music and Beer Festival:

Church Street, Stratton

Audley. Free entry to 30 food and drink stalls, live music all day, mini beer festival and children's entertainment. 11am. Free. 07971 437485.

The Otmoor Challenge: Millennium Hall, Straight Mile, Horton cum Studley. Half-marathon run over trails and roads – mass start 2pm. Walk half-marathon or five-mile alternate start from 9am. Village fete from noon. Details on www.otmoorchallenge.co.uk. 9am. Walkers £5, runners £12 in advance, £15 on the day. 01865 351496.

Jumble Sale: East Hanney British Legion hall, Mill Orchard, East Hanney. Wantage & Grove Lions. 1.30pm. 01235 223467.

World Textile Day: King's Sutton Memorial Hall, Astrop Road, Kings Sutton, Banbury. Traders plus an exhibition and two sessions of talks. 10am. Free. 01588 638712.

SUNDAY

Ewelme Watercress Beds Nature Reserve Open Afternoon:

Watercress Centre, The Street, Ewelme. 2pm. £3 per adult and free for accompanied children. **Flea Market and Collectors Fair:** Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary, Old Didcot Road Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Wallingford. 10am. Buyers entry 50p. 01491 833938.

Gardens Open Leaffield and Fordwells: Leaffield and Fordwells. 1.30pm. Admission £5, children free. 01993 878000.

Designer Wedding Dress Sale: Whately Hall Hotel, 17 Horse Fair, Banbury. 10.30am. Free. 07930 520915.

Littleworth Family Fun Day and Dog Show: Littleworth Playing Field, Littleworth, Faringdon. 1pm. Entrance £1, under 12's free. 01367 241328.

National Gardens Scheme: Steeple Aston Gardens, Steeple Aston. Limited wheelchair access. Dogs on leads. Plant sale. Teas in village hall. 1pm. Combined Adult £6, chd free.

National Gardens Scheme: Wayside, 82 Banbury Road, Kidlington. Quarter-acre garden shaded by mature trees. Mixed border with some rare and unusual plants and shrubs. A climber clothed pergola leads past a dry gravel garden to the woodland garden with an extensive collection of hardy ferns. Wheelchair access. Plant sale. Teas. 2pm. Adult £3, chd free. 01865 460180.

National Gardens Scheme: Whitehill Farm, Widford. Two acres of hillside gardens and woodland with spectacular views overlooking the River Windrush. Dogs on leads. Plant sale. Teas. 2pm. Adult £3.50, chd free. 01993 822894.

Priory Road Garden Crawl: Priory Road, Wantage. A unique opportunity to wander leisurely round seven gardens in old Wantage; pausing for cream teas in the courtyard garden of a converted Convent and strolling through a variety of formal and relaxed planting to watch the ducks on the Letcombe Brook. 2pm. Adults £5, children free. 01235 223554.

Summer Birds at Thrupp Lake: Thrupp Lake, Thrupp Lane, Radley. Local expert Ben Carpenter leads a morning stroll around the lake. Booking essential. 10am. £5 adult, £2 child. 01865 407792.

Summer Picnic: Earth Trust Centre, Little Wittenham. Bring along a picnic, or try some delicious food from Poem Tree Cafe, and join in traditional summer fun and games. See www.earthtrust.org.uk/ whatson. 11am. £5 adult, £2 child, £12 family. 01865 407792.

The Chiltern Chase: Ewelme Recreation Ground, Cow Common, Ewelme. 10/15km and 5km multi-terrain runs, in and around Ewelme. 10am. £12 on door or £10 if booked in advance. 8pm. 07710 545555.

Transport Rally: Didcot Railway Centre, Entry through Didcot Parkway railway station, Didcot. More than 30 buses, Aveling and Porter steam road roller, commercial vehicles including WW2 vehicles, various car exhibits,

To get an event of any kind listed here, enter the details into our easy-to-use online database at thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/events

Please add your event no later than ten days before the day of publication.

miniature railways, including rides, stationary engines. Dakota flypast at about 3pm, weather permitting. 10.30am. £10 adult, £8 child. 01235 817200.

Volunteers Fair: Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot. More than 20 charity groups and good causes will be in attendance. 10am. Free. 01235 212082.

MONDAY

East Hagbourne Scarecrow Trail: New Road, Main Road, Blewbury Road, East Hagbourne. Shakespeare and all that. Maps available for £1 from the East Hagbourne Community Shop and The Fleur de Lys. 10am. 01235 813826.

TUESDAY

Carer's Week: Sainsbury's supermarket, 12-14 Market Place, Chipping Norton. Groups and in store to help raise awareness for carers in our community. Stroke awareness will even your blood pressure for. 9.30am. Free. 01608 642579.

Family History helpdesk: Oxfordshire History Centre, St Lukes Church, Temple Road, Cowley. Oxfordshire Family History Society advisors are available to help you research your family tree, whether in Oxfordshire or beyond. 10am. Free. 01865 385151.

WEDNESDAY

Cotswold Decorative & Fine Arts Society: Bradwell Hall, Bradwell Village, Burford. The Cotswold Decorative and Fine Arts Society June lecture is "Gone in a Flash? A History of Firework Displays from the Renaissance to the Age of Electricity" by Timothy Wilcox. 10.15am. Non-members very welcome (suggested donation £8).

Harwell WI: Harwell Village Hall, High Street, Didcot. "Hands On" Art evening painting with Linda Benton. 7.30pm. Free. 01235 835649.

Jewellery making – beaded earrings: No Two Things, 120 Broadway, Didcot. Learn jewellery making techniques from Viv and take away four pairs of earrings. Booking required. 7.30pm. £20. 01235 511550.

Oxfordshire Railway Society: Seacourt Day Centre, Seacourt Road, Botley. 'The Great Western's Steam Railmotors' – an illustrated talk by Peter Jennings (Great Western Society). 7.30pm. £3.

Pottery painting – Flower pots: No Two Things, 120 Broadway, Didcot. Brighten your patio with a posh pottery flowerpot that you've designed and painted yourself. Eight places available. Booking required. 7pm. £20. 01235 511550.

Music

THURSDAY

Burwell Hall, Thorney Leys, Witney: Ben Holder Quartet. Witney Jazz Club. £12 on door or £10 if booked in advance. 8pm. 07710 545555.

Harris Manchester College, Mansfield Road, Oxford: The Crimson Petal and the White. Featuring works by Barber, Schubert, Schumann, Quilter and Verdi. Alison Baily, mezzo, and Sarah Lister, piano. Free with retiring collection. 1.30pm. 01865 271006.

The Wheatsheaf, 129 High Street, Oxford: Dave O'Higgins. Tenor saxophonist accompanied by The Spin

Trio. The Spin Jazz Club. 8.30pm. £10, £8 (conc), £6 (student).

O2 Academy Oxford, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford: Hot 8 Brass Band, Harleghblu, Temple Funk Collective. New Orleans hip-hop jazz fusion collective. 7pm. £17.50.

The Cock Inn, Combe: Nick Gill. Classic jazz and ragtime piano/vocals. 8pm. Free.

MONDAY

Angel, Market Square, Witney: Pete McCray. Soul and reggae. 9pm. 01993 703238.

Berinsfield SC, Green Furlong, Berinsfield: Uprooted. Covers duo. 9pm. 07708 998595.

Bicester Methodist Church, Sheep Street, Bicester: Jeremy Meager. Organ Concert. In support of the Urology Department at Churchill Hospital. £11. 7.30pm. 01869 252170.

TUESDAY

Cornerstone Arts Centre, 25 Station Road, Didcot: The Dreaming Spires with support. Pay what you think it's worth (held in cafe bar). 8pm. 01235 515144.

Holywell Music Room, Holywell Street, Oxford: ICSM Records – The Artists Live, UK Tour. Husband and wife team Ivo Varbanov and Fiammetta Tarli. £12 (£8). 7.30pm. 01865 305305.

O2 Academy Oxford, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford: Cancer Bats, I Cried Wolf. Tomato-based punk-metal merchants. 6pm. £11.

SATURDAY

Cornerstone Arts Centre, 25 Station Road, Didcot:

Boulevard Swing. £15, £13.50 (cons). 7.30pm. 01235 515144.

East Challow British Legion Hall, Vicarage Hill, East Challow: Wantage Big Band Supper Concert. £12.50, cons. £8. 7.30pm. 01235 767541.

The Friends' Meeting House, 43 St Giles, Oxford:

Oxford CND Jazz Concert. Nick Gill and guest star Martin Litton plus Holly Taylor and Janice. £12, £10 concession. 7.30pm. 01865 248357.

The Queen's College, Shulman Auditorium, High Street, Oxford:

The Eglesfield Musical Society Saturday Recital Series. Jo Cousins, Bernadette Johns, James Orrell, and Michael Pandya, viola, voice, and piano. Free with a retiring collection. 1.30pm. 01865 279120.

The Swan Hotel, 21 Acre End Street, Eynsham:

Eynshfest. One-day mini music festival. Seven bands. Free. 1pm. 07758 441909.

Tiddy Hall, Shipton Road, Ascott-under-Wychwood: Ninebarrow plus support from Robert Lane, Wychwood Folk Club. £10 in advance, £12 on the door. 8pm. 01993 831427.

O2 Academy Oxford, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford:

Peerless Pirates, Dead Pheasants, The Standard, Acoustic Journey. 7pm. £9.

SUNDAY

Cornerstone Arts Centre, 25 Station Road, Didcot:

Celebrating Stephane Grappelli with the Tim Klapuis Trio. £15, £13.50 (cons). 8pm. 01235 515144.

Spread Eagle Hotel, Cornmarket, Thame:

Thame Guitar & Music Fair. Plus live music all day. £9 accompanied under 12's free. 10am. 07831 206404.

St Nicolas Church, Market Place, Abingdon:

Harcourt Ensemble. Flute,

harp and strings. Abbey Chamber Concerts. £15/£20/£25. 3pm. 07775 904626.

New Theatre, Oxford, 2 George Street, Oxford: The Hot Sardines. Vintage New Orleans-style swinging jazz band. 7.30pm. £24.

MONDAY

The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford: Lera Lynn, George Cosby. Experimental bluegrass/country. 7.30pm. £14 (adv), £16 (otd).

O2 Academy Oxford, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford: Public Image Ltd, The Beat. UK post-punk pioneers plus two-tone legends. 7pm. £27.50.

TUESDAY

Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont Street, Oxford: Derek Paravicini jazz quartet. £25 chair (£10 bench). 7.30pm. 07775 904626.

Christ Church Cathedral, St Aldate's, Oxford: Andrew Chamblin Memorial Concert. Given by Stephen Cleobury CBE with an hour-long programme of Baroque organ works.

Free. 8pm.

The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford: Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited. Jazz at the Bull. 8.30pm. Free.

WEDNESDAY

Dorchester Abbey, High Street, Dorchester on Thame, Oxfordshire: ICSM Records – The Artists Live, UK Tour. Husband and wife team Ivo Varbanov and Fiammetta Tarli. £20, £15, £10. 7.30pm.

Sheldonian Theatre, Broad Street, Oxford: Oxford University Philharmonia Trinity Term Concert. £5/10 in advance, £6/12 on the door. 8pm. 07860 807183.

The Queen's College, Chapel, High Street, Oxford: The Queen's College, Wednesday Organ Recital Series. Josef Miltschitzky (Music School of VBW Ottobeuren eV). Free with a retiring collection. 1.10pm. 01865 279120.

New Theatre, Oxford, 2 George Street, Oxford: Adam Ant. 7.30pm. £32.15-£37.65.

Theatre

Burton Taylor Studio, Beaumont Street, Oxford: Until Jun 4, *No Exit*. By Jean-Paul Satre. 7.30pm. £6 (£5). Jun 7-11, *Splendour*. Feminist play. 7.30pm. £6 (£5). 01865 305305.

Glee Club, Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford: Jun 3, Sara Pascoe. 8pm. £12. Jun 4, Archie Maddox, Carey Marx, George Egg and Joe Wells. 7.15pm. £14.50. 0871 472 04007.

Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street, Oxford: Jun 3-4, *Jungle Book*. Featuring street dance and circus. 7pm plus 2pm on Saturday, £11-£19. Jun 8-18, *The Complete Deaths*. There are 75 deaths in the works of Shakespeare – Spymonkey perform them all. 7.30pm. £17 (£15). Jun 10, *Ballet Black*. Triple bill. 8pm. £11.50-£22. 01865 305305.

Cornerstone Arts Centre, 25 Station Road, Didcot: Jun 2, *Comedy Club*. Carl Donnelly and Will Duggan. 8pm. £12.50, £11 (cons). 01235 515144.

Chipping Norton Theatre, Spring Street, Chipping Norton: Jun 5, *Ballet Central*. 7pm. £15.50 (£13.50). Jun 8, *The Andrew Pepper Rehabilitation Project*. 7.45pm. £13.50. Jun 9, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. 7.45pm. £14 (£12). Jun 10, *Russell Kane*. 7.45pm. £16.50. 01608 642350.

The Performance Hall, Cooper School, Churchill Road, Bicester: Jun 2-4, *Carmen The Musical*. 7.30pm. £13, children £7. 07956 759653.

CakeSport

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Club member Brian Davis presents Andy Gunn with the trophy

Gunn takes top prize

CAPTAIN Andy Gunn took the top honour at Banbury United's presentation awards night.

The defender, who led the Puritans to promotion back to the Evo-Stik Southern League Premier Division, won the club player of the year award.

Midfielder Zac McEachran left with the most trophies, picking

FOOTBALL

up the young player of the year, players' player and Puritans Radio player of the year awards.

Goalkeeper Jack Harding received the manager's player of the year accolade.

Banbury make it four wins in a row

Skipper Sabin impresses again to help beat rivals Wycombe

LLOYD Sabin continued his fine form to star with bat and ball as Banbury beat High Wycombe by 37 runs for a fourth straight win.

The 21-year-old hit 137 not out off 89 balls to help the visitors set 319-5 off their 50 overs in Division 1 of the Serious Cricket Home Counties Premier League.

Captain Sabin then took 3-31 as the hosts fell short.

The victory sees Banbury remain top of the table, level with Henley on 80 points.

Hugo Darby (48) and Craig Haupt (32) helped Banbury

CRICKET

make an excellent start.

When they were both dismissed, the hosts were in a good position at 93-2, before Sabin took centre stage.

The Oxfordshire batsman combined with Kurtis Patterson and Richard West to put on third and fourth-wicket stands of 59 and 98 to steer Banbury to 319-5.

In reply, Garth Davison's century (103) put Wycombe in good shape at 203-4.

But their challenge was derailed when they lost three wickets for 11 runs.

The tail put up a fight, but they fell short.

BANBURY

H Darby c Hawkes b Haddow	48
C Haupt st Russell b Amjaid	32
K Patterson c Benning b Parsons	35
L Sabin not out	137
R West c Dawson b Haddow	22
L Ryan c Amjaid b Benning	17
G Haupt not out	10
Extras	18
Total (5 wkt, 50 ovs)	319

HIGH WYCOMBE

G Baker c Taylor b Penhale	12
G Dawson c Hill Ryan	103
P Sawyer b Ryan	33
N Hawkes lbw Sabin	32
J Benning c Wright b Sabin	20
G Russell run out	2
E Casterton not out	26
C Parsons c&b West	7
U Amjaid c Ryan b Sabin	23

J Burden not out 20
Extras 282
Total (8 wkt, 50 ovs) 282

Fall: 1-77, 2-123, 3-191, 4-203, 5-222, 6-222, 7-233.
Bowling: Penhale 5-0-22, Taylor 4-0-24, Wright 6-0-42, Hill 5-1-33, Ryan 10-0-49, West 10-0-72, Sabin 10-31-3.

High Wycombe 8pts, Banbury 20

LATEST TABLE

	Division 1							
	P	W	D	L	NR	BP	Pn	Pts
Banbury	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	80
Henley	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	80
H Wycombe	4	2	0	1	1	8	0	54
G & Lt Tew	4	2	0	1	6	0	52	
Burnham	4	2	0	2	0	12	0	52
Tring Park	4	2	0	1	1	6	0	47
Finchampstd	4	1	0	2	1	14	0	40
Slough	4	0	0	3	1	26	0	32
Harefield	4	0	0	3	1	20	0	26
Reading	4	0	0	4	0	19	0	19

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ARIES

Mar 21-Apr 19

This week, you actually need to stop preparing and start doing. You thought you did not have the back up of close ones but you were wrong. Midweek conversations show you can actually afford to aim higher. A new face a friend introduces you to links to your future in more ways than you can imagine! Ring now to hear why this is the most important month of the year for you.

0906 585 4360

TAURUS

Apr 20-May 20

Instead of sweeping your feelings under the carpet, why don't you try saying how you really feel? Time is of the essence in love this week my friend, as you have until Thursday to say sorry where it's due and to admit your true feelings. Mars brings out your playful nature which could see you playing romantic games which lead to burn fingers. Ring for more astro gossip on your love life.

0906 585 4361

GEMINI

May 21-Jun 20

You want to know what is going on in other people's lives? Well try to remember that quick questions you also become involved in other's problems. Know how far is too far to go with flirting this weekend, as you're beginning to get yourself a reputation. Work papers, contacts and emails all make for a much more secure future. Ring now to hear how travel and love make June a month to enjoy.

0906 585 4362

CANCER

Jun 21-Jul 22

Less speed, more haste is a saying to remember. You see Cancer, you are beginning to get yourself a reputation and, if you're not careful, you are going to end up losing the interest of the very person you have been trying to impress. Children need careful handling and you may have to tell them a white lie to avoid knowing too much about your personal life. Ring now for insight.

0906 585 4363

LEO

Jul 23-Aug 22

Try to take your time when doing sums and working out finances or costs at the beginning of this week, as an adventurous mood could see you taking on more than you should. A face from the past comes back into your life and holds the key to you coming full circle to a matter you have long been wanting to resolve. Ring now to hear about the flirtations seven days ahead.

0906 585 4364

VIRGO

Aug 23-Sep 22

I see from just a glance at your stars that you've been overdoing things recently Virgo, but from Sunday you start to see with ease what needs to be done to feel that you're back in control of your life. Don't let a well meaning but unreliable influence talk you out of your plans. You know what has to be done to take charge, so do it. Ring now to hear why it's worth accepting last minute long distance plans.

0906 585 4365

LIBRA

Sep 23-Oct 22

Don't be disappointed with things that haven't gone your way, as there are several opportunities before this week to right any wrongs and to get help and support from the most unexpected of sources. Cancelled plans help you put a distance between you and someone who was becoming a liability in your life. Ring now to hear how your ruling planet promises proposals.

0906 585 4366

SCORPIO

Oct 23-Nov 21

This week, you find out that someone you had not seen for a long time was not avoiding you, but just had a lot to cope with and was not intentionally pushing you away. Go slow in relationships though, as you may come across a more pushy light than you intend. Allow others to talk so you can find out what it is they really want and can offer. Ring now to reveal your true calling.

0906 585 4367

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22-Dec 21

Instead of playing games and waiting for things to happen to other people, why don't you make things happen to you? Instead of talking to yourself, why don't you make things happen to your mind. For once, this is a good move not a bad one, as you hold more aces than you think. You have been following other's advice when it is actually only your own thoughts and feelings that will get you what and who you want. Ring now for a love prediction.

0906 585 4368

CAPRICORN

Dec 22-Jan 19

There is a really artistic feel to your chart which should bring the need in you to try things which most people have never appealed to. Be bold Capricorn. I've been waiting several weeks for you to feel like this. Unexpected visitors to the home put your nose out of joint, but be polite if you want to gain and maintain the upper hand. Ring now to shake up recent delays.

0906 585 4369

AQUARIUS

Jan 20-Feb 18

Instead of putting all of your time and energy into others peoples lives, why don't you try and put a little more into your own. Are you avoiding having to make a personal decision? I think so. Be brave and speak from the heart as you're about to discover that your feeling are reciprocated. Travel plans become expensive if you don't reign them in. Ring now so I can tell your future.

0906 585 4370

PISCES

Feb 19-Mar 20

I know that your close ones have caused you a great deal of stress and worry, but I also know that there is nothing before you that you cannot sort out to your advantage. You weren't doing things your way and you weren't doing as others wished, you were stuck in the middle. Taking control by Tuesday sees you gaining the respect and support of a very important face. Ring now to talk contracts.

0906 585 4371

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Announcements - Public Notices

INSOLVENCY ACT 1986

IN BANKRUPTCY

BANBURY COUNTY COURT

NO 83 of 2005 RE: SANDRA BULL

Of 6 Westhill Avenue, Brackley, Northants NN13 6AD, Service Engineer. Also known as Sandra Lewis (Nee Tuckey).

D.O.B: 20 June 1961

NOTE: the above-named was discharged from the proceedings and may no longer have a connection with the address listed.

I intend to pay within four months from 1st July 2016 (being the last day for proving) the first and final dividend of 24 p/£. Creditors who have not yet proved their debts must do so by 1st July 2016 (being last day of proving) otherwise they will be excluded from the dividend. The required proof of debt form is available on the Insolvency Service website (www.bis.gov.uk/insolvency, select "Forms" and then form 6.37). Alternatively, you can contact my office at LTADT, West Wing, Ground Floor, Brunel, Chatham Maritime, Kent ME4 4AF, telephone 01634 894 7000 to supply a form.

NO 250 of 2007 RE: JENNIFER MARY LEIGHTON

Who at the date of the bankruptcy order 18th September 2007 resided at 10 Arthrem House, Moreton Pinkey Daventry, Northants NN11 3SF and carried on business as 'Towcester Chiropractor Clinic' 58 Watling Street, Towcester, Northants NN12 6AF.

D.O.B: 2 November 1956

NOTE: the above-named was discharged from the proceedings and may no longer have a connection with the addresses listed.

I intend to pay within four months from 30th June 2016 (being the last day for proving) the first and final dividend of 6.06 p/£.

Creditors who have not yet proved their debts must do so by 30th June 2016 otherwise they will be excluded from the dividend. The required proof of debt form is available on the Insolvency Service website (www.bis.gov.uk/insolvency, select "Forms" and then form 6.37). Alternatively, you can contact my office at Second Floor, 3 Piccadilly Place, London Road, Manchester M1 3BN or telephone 0161 234 8500 to supply a form.

Mr D Gibson, Official Receiver and trustee

Mr D Gibson, Official Receiver and trustee



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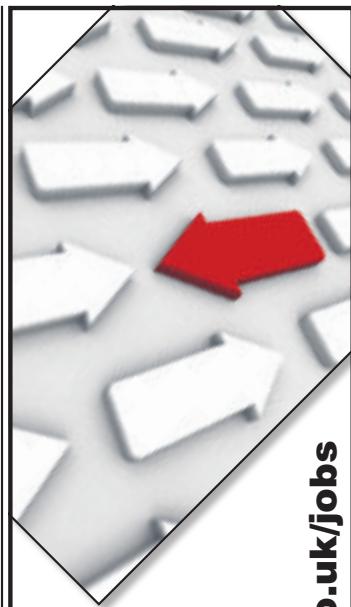
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Harbages Farmhouse in Warmington, known by villagers as 'the Harry Potter house', is on the market for £1.095m through Knight Frank

Magical charm to home of late Harry Potter actor

IT COULD be a magical moment for whoever buys Harry Potter star Richard Harris's former home near Banbury.

The late actor, who played Professor Dumbledore in the first two films, lived at Harbages Farmhouse in Warmington for four years.

Owner Miles Stevens-Hoare says the house is known in the village as 'the Harry Potter house'.

He remembers being shown around before he bought it 13 years ago and spotting a wizard-style black cloak

Gill Oliver
gill.oliver@nqo.com

and hat. He said: "At that point my kids were quite young and were extremely taken with the Harry Potter-style black robe and hat that were just draped over a trunk.

"Whether it was something from the Harry Potter films or not, I don't know but it became family folklore that it was."

The 17th-century, Grade-II listed house looks out over the village green

and duck pond.

Mr Stevens-Hoare, who works for a children's book publisher in Oxford, added: "Richard Harris was a regular in the village pub, The Plough.

"He must have had to navigate the duck pond to reach there but I don't think he ever fell in.

"He was tremendously well known and liked in the village.

"There are lots of stories about him but all are positive ones about what a character he was."

Mr Harris, who had many leading

roles on stage and in film, including *Gladiator* and *Camelot*, died in 2002.

The Grade-II listed house is set in half-an-acre of walled gardens with a courtyard, vegetable plot, fruit trees and double garage.

The drawing room and dining room both have inglenook fireplaces and an original stone spiral staircase leads to a cellar.

There is also a study, sitting room and kitchen/breakfast room.

Upstairs are five bedrooms and three bathrooms.

Warmington was also home to former *The Archers* actor and scriptwriter Norman Painting, who played Phil Archer in the radio drama.

James Way, of agents Knight Frank, said: "Warmington is quite special, with its village green and duck pond."

Harbages Farm is on the market for £1.095m through Knight Frank.

For more information about the house, call 01789 297735 or visit knightfrank.com.

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Flat 3, Dorita House

Martin & Co are pleased to offer this one bedroom flat for rent on the Broughton Road. The property comprises: entrance hall, living room, kitchen and bedroom. It is unfurnished, neutrally decorated and is available from 6th June. The property is conveniently situated for the town centre and the train station. EPC Rating E.

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flat 3, 17 Calthorpe Road

Martin & Co are pleased to present a new to the market two bedroom spacious flat within walking distance to the town centre and train station. Hallway leads to open plan kitchen with breakfast bar and good size living room with period features. There are two double bedrooms with fitted wardrobes. The bathroom comprises bath and shower and W.C. EPC Rating D.

800

46 Centre Street

Martin & Co are pleased to present a spacious four bedroom mid terraced property situated in Grimsbury within walking distance to the town centre and train station. The property comprises two reception rooms; kitchen; upstairs there are four bedrooms on 2 split levels. The master bedroom benefits from an ensuite bathroom. EPC Rating: D.

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119 Broom Way

Martin & Co are pleased to present this spacious three bedroom property. The property comprises a separate kitchen with fridge freezer and washing machine; spacious lounge overlooking the garden; upstairs there are three bedrooms and a family bathroom with bath and shower. The property benefits from a rear enclosed garden and allocated parking.

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Room 3, 66 Broughton Road

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The definitive view
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Volkswagen's family values



FAMILIES ask a lot of their vehicles but few kinds of car can answer more of those questions than the large MPV. The Sharan is Volkswagen's idea of the ultimate big people carrier with a variety of seating options and punchy yet economical engines. Sliding side doors enhance access and the seats themselves contort into a wide array of different layouts. This improved model gets smarter looks, greater efficiency and more connectivity. It's a car of its time.

Background

When the original Volkswagen Sharan was launched in 1995, there were far fewer options for car buyers looking to carry seven passengers than there are today. As the Sharan MK1 aged gracefully, the market sector it called home was being nibbled away at by family-sized 4x4s, large estate cars and even smaller compact MPVs with an extra pair of seats positioned in the boot.

Driving Experience

The engine line-up opens with a 1.4-litre petrol, the idea of which might set alarm bells ringing in light of the Sharan's size and this unit's lack thereof. Fortunately, Volkswagen isn't offering this vast piece of automotive real estate with any old weak-willed 1.4. The power-

plant in question is the Twincharger 1.4 TSI which generates 150PS with the aid of turbocharger and supercharger. Most owners though, will want a TDI diesel - and there are three 2.0-litre choices, offering either 115, 150 or 184PS. They come with manual gearboxes as standard but Volkswagen's DSG dual clutch automatic is available as an option and will make a lot of sense for many Sharan buyers.

Design and Build

The easiest way to identify this improved MK2 model Sharan is to take a look at its rear where LED light technology now features in the tail lamps. Otherwise, the practical looks are much as before, housing impressive interior versatility. The styling is typical Volkswagen, uncomplicated but classy, and there's a conspicuously large glass area bringing plenty of light into the cabin while affording all occupants a good view out. Just because a vehicle has seven seats, it doesn't mean that seven adult-sized occupants can fit comfortably on board but this Sharan has the space that compact MPVs and large SUVs invariably lack.

The rear doors slide back to give a wide access point to the second row of seats. Both these doors and the tailgate can be electrically powered for added convenience and access to

the third row seating is improved by the Easy Entry function through which the outer seats in the second row tilt and slide forward in a single motion.

The entire cabin - which now features smarter accents and materials - is based around the EasyFold seating system. This allows the three second row seats to slide back and forth individually to alter the legroom available. It also means that all of the rear seats can fold flat to the floor creating extra luggage space. As usual, there isn't a whole lot of luggage capacity with all the seats occupied but with the third row folded down, a huge 711-litres is available up to the car's belt-line. A detachable mesh partition allows cargo to be stacked to the ceiling with all the rear seats folded. The cabin looks as solidly constructed as we've come to expect from Volkswagen with the now-smarter dashboard's controls being as clearly marked and simple to operate as you'll find anywhere.

Market and Model

As before, pricing sits mainly in the £27,000 to £34,000 bracket common to his class of car and trim levels run simply from 'S' to 'SE' and on to 'SEL'. Most buyers will want the 7-seat layout but customers can also opt for a six-seater configuration, offering a 'business' layout

with a pair of roomier seats in the second and third rows.

The second generation of Volkswagen's modular infotainment platform is used in the Sharan offering a maximum level of connectivity. This is one of the first of the brand's vehicles to be equipped with "App Connect"; thanks to the MirrorLink, Android Auto (Google) and Car Play (Apple) systems that can now be activated in-car, a wide variety of apps can be fed into this model's much improved infotainment system.

Cost of Ownership

The petrol (TSI) and diesel (TDI) engines have been completely redesigned for greater efficiency. These turbocharged direct-injection units are now up to 15% more fuel-efficient and they all conform to the Euro-6 emissions standard. All engines may be combined with the agile 6-speed dual clutch gearbox (DSG), which now also enables the fuel-saving coasting function (which allows decoupling of the engine from the drivetrain when the driver's foot is taken off the accelerator pedal). As before, fuel economy is helped by a Stop-Start system and regenerative braking which help reduce the workload of the Sharan's engines.

Summary

Whether you have a big family or a small one that makes big demands on your family car, Volkswagen's latest Sharan is designed to cope. It ticks the usual large MPV boxes with economical engines, a light and spacious cabin, a versatile seating system and good safety credentials. Buyers can also choose from a range of high-tech features and Volkswagen's simple, sturdy design is common throughout. There are more ways to carry lots of luggage or passengers than ever before but the Sharan has to be amongst the classiest ways to get the job done.

Facts at a glance

CAR: Volkswagen Sharan
PRICES: £26,650 - £36,630
INSURANCE GROUPS: 15-23
CO2 EMISSIONS: 130 - 156g/km
PERFORMANCE: [1.4 TSI]
0-62mph: 9.9s / top speed: 124mph
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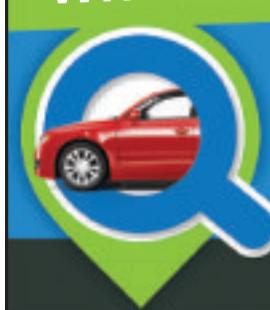
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Motors - first for used cars

Used Car Road Test

by Jonathan Crouch



Ford's impressive small wonder



THERE'S a whole lot of love out there for the Ford Fiesta. Down the years, its various generations have completed more school runs, shopping trips and traffic-plagued commutes than any other UK supermini. There have been high and low points along the way but in the final reckoning, the 2008 car must surely go down as one of the best. Should buyers have as big a soft spot for the car once it's been round the block a few times and cropped up on the used market?

The History

The supermini market where the Fiesta competes moves at a searing pace so it would be a bit much to ask for the car to maintain class leadership throughout its lifecycle. The previous generation model had followed the familiar Fiesta trajectory, emerging at the top of the market in 2002 only to be gradually reeled in by newer rivals. By the time this car turned up in 2008, the outgoing model was lacking size and sophistication in comparison to the class best. Ford needed to come back strong in these areas and it duly did.

This Fiesta was launched in the

summer of 2008 with a familiar-looking line-up of engines and trim levels. Buyers could choose the affordable Style and Studio models, the sporty Zetec and Zetec S or the luxurious Titanium. Engines included the 1.25, 1.4 and 1.6-litre petrols plus 1.4 and 1.6-litre TDCi diesels. The super-economical ECOnetic versions arrived a little later and the Edge variants turned up towards the end of 2009. All Fiestas got ESP stability control from mid 2010.

What To Look For

There shouldn't be too many problems with pre-owned Fiestas and if a particular model gives cause for concern, just walk away, there are plenty of others about. Make sure your prospective purchase has been properly serviced and that the tyres are in decent shape, plus check for the usual kiddie damage and parking scrapes. Engines are, on the whole, reliable but watch for the usual signs of wear particularly on high mileage models.

The economical ECOnetic has its own look with lowered suspension and aerodynamic tweaks but the same wedgy appeal is common

across the range. The interior reprises the edgy and angular themes of the outside, the fascia contrasting soft-touch materials with hard silvery plastics. The car feels modern and is very nicely executed in terms of quality with a pronounced modern feel.

The wedge-effect of the Fiesta in profile doesn't bode well for the rear seat passengers in the three-door car but the Fiesta surprises with decent legroom and headroom that's manageable even for a six-footer. The windows are small and set high up, so light isn't abundant in the back but the shopping bags, coats and road atlases that owners will store there most of the time won't be overly worried. The five-door models fare better with a bigger glass area creating a roomier feel and all derivatives share the same easily navigable control system for their various electronic functions.

On the Road

So, climb in: what's the experience like? Well, the first thing that you'll probably notice is that there's nowhere to put your key, Ford having switched to one of

those trendy (but rather pointless) 'Power' buttons which you press to start. It's easy to get comfortable at the wheel thanks to supportive seating and rake/reach wheel adjustment.

Fiesta is such a slick piece of engineering that it largely masks any deficiency in outright pace with its poise and fluency on the road. This is a fine handling car with its variable power assisted steering providing weighty reassurance at speed and a light touch when manoeuvring. The suspension absorbs bumps expertly and the firmer set-up in the Zetec-S model makes for a really lively drive without damaging ride comfort. The 'Stall Prevention' feature is a boon in town. It's designed to help in low speed manoeuvres by altering the engine's ignition profile and preventing that embarrassing stalling moment when there's a queue of traffic behind you.

Engine choices start with the 60PS 1.25 and 90PS 1.4-litre Duratec petrol units. Than there's the frugal if rather leisurely 68PS 1.4-litre TDCi. Above this level, things start to get a bit more interesting. The 90PS 1.6-litre TDCi Duratorq engine emits

just 99g/km of CO₂ in the ECOnetic models, and isn't far behind elsewhere with a decent turn of pace to boot. At the other end of the scale, the 120PS 1.6-litre T-VCT petrol powerplant makes 60mph in 9.9s. That's not hugely rapid but the Fiesta driving experience still make this model preferable over many faster hatchbacks for the enthusiast.

Overall

Some impressive cars have carried the Fiesta badge but this version must surely go down as one of the best. The interior design might not be to everyone's taste and there are concerns over how well the jutting fascia will age but the positives outweigh the negatives. The car looks good to most eyes yet beneath the sleek lines is a roomy cabin (rear headroom will only be a problem for tall passengers) and a generous boot. The engines are solid rather than spectacular but the highlight is the ride and the handling. The Fiesta tackles the lumpy British road network with composure, steers with real precision and grips like it's hanging from a branch over a crocodile pit.

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Motors - first for new cars

New Car Launch Model Of The Week

by Jonathan Crouch



SEAT shows us where it's at



SEAT'S Ateca looks a strong proposition in the family Crossover segment. It's well priced, sharply-styled and offers the sporty feel the sector seems to want. In fact, you wonder why it took the Spanish brand so long to bring us a car like this.

Background

Not before time, the Volkswagen Group is properly getting on board with the current market preference for Qashqai-style Crossover models. We'll see a whole series of cars like this from the conglomerate over the next few years: here's SEAT's take on the concept, the Ateca.

Named after a traditional Spanish town, the Ateca shares much with its Volkswagen Tiguan cousin but, says SEAT, offers a sportier, more lifestyle-orientated approach to this kind of car. And a more affordable one too. Sounds promising.

Driving Experience

SEAT promises a line-up of petrol and diesel engines ranging in power from 115 to 190PS - expect a couple of petrol units and three diesels. There's the choice of six-speed manual or optional dual-clutch automatic transmission, plus four-wheel

drive will be available on the diesels.

We expect the 2.0 TDI 190PS diesel to be the unit many buyers will target and it's a strong engine that pulls willingly from low speeds, though isn't the most refined powerplant of its kind.

Early reports suggest that the Ateca will ride firmly - in line with SEAT's preference to make it 'sporty': that's something potential buyers will need to like. The lofty driving position will please them, as will the way that all the major controls are clustered around you. Not so good are the thick, angled C-pillars that block rear three-quarter vision. An optional park assist system and birds-eye camera help with tight spaces.

Design and Build

Under skin, the Ateca sits on the same MQB platform as its more conventional Leon stablemate and uses most of the same mechanicals found in Volkswagen's very similar Tiguan model. Inside, it's also very similar to the Leon - which is no bad thing. The fit and finish is of high quality, though the plastics get scratchier the farther down you go. In the front, there's decent room

for two adults on supportive seats. It's the same in the back, though it's disappointing to find that the rear seats don't slide or recline like they do in the latest Tiguan. The boot's a bit smaller than that pricier

Volkswagen rival model too, though will easily swallow a couple of big cases and a pushchair. You access it via a tailgate offering the option of power operation: it's one of those you can activate by waving your foot beneath the bumper.

Market and Model

Ateca's pricing starts from around £18,000 and there's a choice of three trim levels - 'S', 'SE' and range-topping 'Xcellence', a variant which should come in at under £30,000. The extensive array of technology options extends from full-LED headlights to a broad portfolio of assistance systems, like an innovative Traffic Jam Assist set-up and an Emergency Assist feature, to a package of latest-generation infotainment systems with eight-inch touchscreens and Full Link connectivity.

The infotainment screen functions with MirrorLink and Apple CarPlay connectivity and the system will also read out new text, Twitter and

Facebook messages and let you dictate a reply. It's even got the capability to let you set up your own screen gestures to shortcut to your most popular commands.

Cost of Ownership

Typical Ateca owners will go for the economical diesel models but even the petrol variants should be relatively frugal thanks to advanced TSI technology. Expect the volume 2.0 TDI diesel model to deliver nearly 60mpg on the combined cycle and a CO2 return of around 130g/km. Go for the 190PS version and those figures are very little affected. There's no real penalty for choosing the super-smooth DSG automatic gearbox either.

What else? Well there's SEAT's usual three year/60,000 mile warranty. That's unexceptional when rivals like Toyota and Hyundai offer five years of cover as standard and Kia offers up to seven years.

However, the SEAT deal is extendable, so you might be able to negotiate on that. And it includes two years of Europe-wide roadside assistance.

Summary

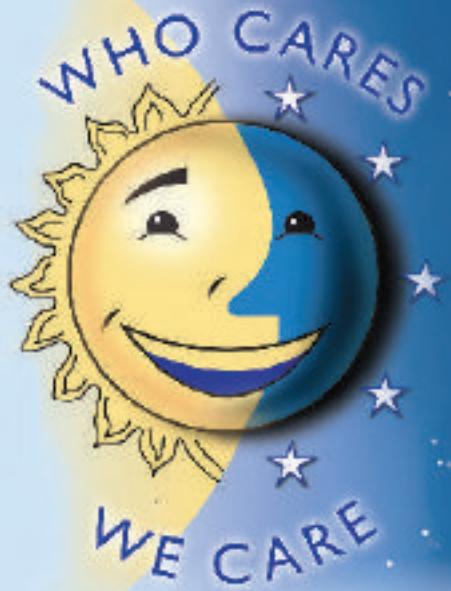
SEAT's first effort in this segment

looks to have been worth waiting for. The Ateca isn't quite the size of a Tiguan - but then it's much more affordable. And there's a dash of spirit and character here that we think potential customers will like. In summary, if you were just about to buy a Nissan Qashqai or something similar, an Ateca is certainly worth a look.

Facts at a glance

CAR: SEAT Ateca
PRICE: £18,000-£30,000 [est] - on the road
INSURANCE GROUP: TBC
CO2 EMISSIONS: TBC
PERFORMANCE: [2.0 TDI 150PS] 0-60mph 9.8s / top speed 123mph [est]
FUEL CONSUMPTION: [2.0 TDI 150PS] (combined) 60mpg [est]
STANDARD SAFETY FEATURES: Twin front, side and curtain airbags, seatbelt pre-tensioners, ABS, ESC
WILL IT FIT IN YOUR GARAGE?: TBC

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